

REMARKS

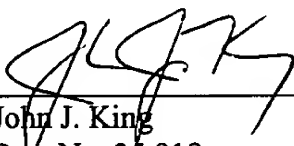
In the Office Action mailed May 4, 2004, claims 1-21 and claims 32-37 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Lau (US Patent No. 5,987,247).

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the interview with Examiner Rimell on February 3, 2004. Applicants have amended the claims in accordance with the Interview Summary dated February 3, 2004. In particular, Applicants have further amended independent claims 1, 8 and 15 to indicate that the user defines tasks and inputs rules during the execution phase of the program that processes the tasks and rules. Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as amended conform with the language in the Examiner-Initiated Interview Summary dated February 3, 2004 and are now in allowable form.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully assert that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request reconsideration of the claims.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 7/1/04



John J. King
Reg. No. 35,918
Attorney for Applicants

BRINKS HOFER GILSON & LIONE
P. O. Box 10395
Chicago, Illinois 60610
(312) 321-4200